

Planning Developments

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Cindy Dunn, our Keynote Speaker for the Annual Dinner.



Guests follow along with the highlights of the Annual Report

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Subdivision Review Meetings—July 17, August 21, September 17
- ◆ Planning Commission Meetings—July 24, August 28, September 24
- ◆ APA-PA Planning Conference October 18–20, 2015 in Pittsburgh

Planning Commission Holds Annual Dinner

The Mifflin County Planning Commission held its annual dinner meeting on April 9, 2015 with approximately 85 people in attendance. Attendees included Mifflin County Commissioners, municipal officials, local planning commission members, State Representatives, and individuals from local businesses, organizations and various engineering firms.

The featured speaker for the evening was Acting Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn of Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

In her role, she is responsible for overseeing Pennsylvania's 117 state parks and 20 state forests. Ms. Dunn's appointment by Governor Tom Wolf is the sixth secretary for DCNR where she worked under three governors in multiple positions over the last two decades.

Since November 2013, Ms. Dunn had served as the president and chief executive officer of PennFuture, a statewide environmental advocacy organization. Prior to her time at PennFuture, Ms. Dunn served as DCNR's Deputy Secretary of Conservation and Technical Services from 2007-2013, where she led DCNR's conservation landscape program and oversaw the community conservation partnerships grant program, which provides \$30-\$60 million annually for conservation and recreation throughout the commonwealth. Ms. Dunn's other leadership posts at DCNR include director of the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation as well as director of the Office of Edu-

cation, Communications and Partnerships. Ms. Dunn first joined DCNR in the mid '90s as director of community relations and environmental education.

Ms. Dunn's presentation focused on open space and recreation not only being important in an urban setting, but also critical to develop in our rural communities in terms of community revitalization and sustainability. Recreation is a major factor in attracting and retaining businesses as well as keeping our young people to want to remain in our rural communities.

Ms. Dunn gave a brief history on individuals who aided Pennsylvania in development of quality recreation resources, sustainability, management and resource conservation. They were Rachel Carson, Gifford Pinchot, J. Horace McFarland, Mina Lloyd Dock and Joseph Trimble Rothrock.

She also stated that creating recreational resources, such as boat launches and rail to trails, provides \$1 billion annually to the state of Pennsylvania, as well as 13,000 jobs.

For 2015, the Pennsylvania Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, which consists of 41 representatives from environmentally-based committees, has planned to focus on health and wellness, local parks and recreation, tourism and economy, reservation management, and funding and financial stability.

Dunn expressed her understanding of younger generations being more in-

Annual Meeting *(continued from front page)*

involved with their electronics rather than with the great outdoors. To challenge this fact, she said DCNR has a free smart phone app that helps users locate trails. She also provided different websites, explorepatrails.com and getoutdoorspa.org. These websites accept user pictures and input and help kids and families learn how to fish and do other outdoor activities.

Prior to Ms. Dunn's presentation, Mr. William Gomes, Director of the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department, presented the 2014 Annual Report. The report highlighted the different committees that have been active in 2014 as well as the number of plans that were adopted or revised in 2014. The plans included the Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan, the Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the Regional Municipal Waste Management Plan. The 2014 Annual Report also highlighted the projects of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the plans that have been reviewed for subdivision and development and the programs that were offered this year for the members of the Commission.

Another highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Community Planning Award. This award is presented by the Mifflin County Planning Commission to an individual, organization, or community that has demonstrated leadership in the community planning. The award is given annually to recognize the efforts and talents of an individual or organization to improve our community. This award is a way for our municipalities to recognize positive planning efforts. This year we would like to recognize a public-private partnership between the Borough of Juniata Terrace and Mr. David Knox.

Public-private partnerships are not something you always see in Mifflin County, but has been evident in the Borough of Juniata Terrace. On March 27, 2014, a disastrous fire struck the 300 block of Juniata Terrace. Of the 28 units comprising this particular block, 26 units were affected in one manner or another. There were 11 units burned out and the other 15 units suffered damage in various degrees. Although there was widespread generosity to the residents affected by the fire from various organizations, there was a great concern about whether the community would be made whole again.

The Borough of Juniata Terrace and its Borough Council and many citizens made every effort possible to secure funding to assist in the massive clean-up of the 300 block of Terrace Boulevard with hopes of being able to demolish and rebuild several homes that were totally destroyed.

During the process one of the owners of a destroyed home stepped up and acquired six additional units with the intent of rebuilding homes on the same foundations. In total, nine homes were rebuilt, restoring the architectural integrity of the neighborhood and upgrading the homes to current code standards.

The demolition and rebuild took several months and today the new homes blend into this unique former American Viscose company town beautifully.

This restoration could not have been possible without the collaboration of the Borough of Juniata Terrace and the developer, Mr. David M. Knox. The project has served as motivation for addition investment by other homeowners in the borough, adding value to housing built during the pre-depression era. The seven units Mr. Knox rebuilt are now ready for occupancy.



Director William Gomes presents Mr. Knox and the Juniata Terrace Borough President Bill Conaway the Community Planning Award



Act 167— Stormwater Management Ordinance

On May 28, 2015, Ronald Furlan, Division Manager for Planning and Permits with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, provided an overview of Pennsylvania's Storm Water Management law (Act 167) and its implications on local municipalities.

Mr. Furlan began by giving a history behind the stormwater management legislation. Act 167 was passed in 1978, according to the legislation, to encourage planning and management of stormwater runoff in each watershed, authorize a comprehensive program of stormwater management designated to preserve and restore the flood carrying capacity of commonwealth streams and encourage local administration and management of stormwater consistent with sound water and land use practices. He stated it "was truly progressive in its time." An early step after the legislation was passed was the development of a grant program for the purpose of implementing these plans. However, Act 167 states that if funding for plans cease, it is the municipalities' obligation to continue following the law.

Mifflin County was one of the last counties to get Act 167 funding because in 2009 the state legislature stopped providing funding for the program. The Mifflin County Stormwater Management Plan was adopted in 2010 and according to Act 167 municipalities are given a six month window to adopt the model stormwater ordinance provided in the county plan. Since 2009 due to cutbacks in staffing, DEP has not been able to do much enforcement and has instead focused on the Municipal Separate Stormwater System (MS4) counties that are linked to US EPA regulations. Fortunately, Mifflin County has no MS4 communities, which takes away local initiatives. For this reason, local adoption of the county's stormwater model ordinance is preferred.

According to Mr. Furlan, only a few municipalities in Mifflin County are currently in compliance with Act 167. He mentioned an example where "two counties (who have not complied) are being threatened with having all state funds cut off. You don't want to get to that stage because it just makes ugly relationships." As for local municipalities that have not adopted a stormwater ordinance where there has been a State approved stormwater management plan in place, action will eventually be taken. It may take time due to staffing issues, but last year the northwest region of Pennsylvania was surveyed and all municipalities were in compliance or action was taken. Mifflin County

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Flood Insurance Program Update

On April 23, 2015, Daniel Fitzpatrick, the state's National Flood Insurance Program Coordinator, gave a follow-up presentation to the Mifflin County Planning Commission. He first came in March of 2014.

He started out his presentation giving a background of why this bill came about. The Biggert Waters Act was to make the National Flood Insurance Program more financially stable by raising rates on certain classes of property to reflect true flood risk resulting in the rate increases for many policyholders over time. The Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 lowered some flood insurance rate increases and offer relief to some policy holders who experienced steep flood insurance premiums in 2013 and early 2014. In 2015, rates for most properties (Pre-Flood Insurance Rate Map) will more accurately reflect risk through an elevation certificate, subsidized rates for non-primary residence and non-residential are being phased out now and other subsidized rates will be eliminated over time. The elevation certificate verifies the lowest floor elevation in relation to the base flood elevation. This is done by a surveyor or engineer that verifies whether property is above or below the 100 year flood elevation.

As of April 2015, surcharges, percentage increases on premiums, higher deductibles and triggers are taking effect. Surcharges will be \$25 per year on primary residence and on contents-only and condo unit policies and \$250 per year on all other policies. Annual premium increases at least 5% with a maximum of 18% for residential and 25% for non-primary and business properties. Deductibles will change to \$10,000 maximum for residential properties and policy renewals will trigger the changes. One vehicle available to communities help offset rates is participation in the Community Rating System. Only three municipalities participate in Mifflin County. There are also some cost savings for Community Rating System Communities that have adopted the County's Act 167 stormwater ordinance. Following the meeting, he provided some examples of cost savings to the three municipalities in the program.



FEMA

Mifflin County CDBG Funded Projects Progress

Mifflin County, Derry Township and Brown Township's projects funded by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and Competitive Grant programs continue to progress towards completion. The funded projects benefit low and moderate income citizens and neighborhoods. The following projects are either continuations of previously funded projects or new projects in Mifflin County, Derry Township and Brown Township's CDBG funds.

Mifflin County CDBG Projects Update

The Borough of Juniata Terrace (Sanitary Sewer Slip-lining Project). This project is completed. This involved the trenchless rehabilitation of the sanitary sewer lines along portions of Terrace Boulevard. The final restoration has been finalized by the Contractor. We will process final payments when all supporting documentation has been submitted.

The Milroy area Woodlawn Avenue waterline extension project survey was approved by DCED. The materials for this project will be bid during the early fall with work taking place in late fall or early spring of 2016. Construction of the new line will be completed by the Municipal Authority of the Borough of Lewis-town. Twenty-three households currently with on-site wells will benefit from this extension.

An application was submitted to DCED on November 21, 2014 in the amount of \$220,303 for the following projects status: We are awaiting the final contract from DCED. Pursuant to the contract execution the environmental reviews need to be conducted prior to the commencement of work.

Mifflin Juniata Dental Clinic
(3rd Year – Equipment Purchase)
Project Total: \$11,933.00

Seda-Cog Mann Edge Terrace Phase II
Property Acquisition
Project Total: \$101,215.00

Armagh Township
Stormwater Management & Roadway Improvements
Oak Street, Potlicker Flats, Milroy, PA 17063
Project Total: \$67,500.00

Brown Township CDBG Projects Update

The ADA Accessibility Improvements/Removal of Architectural Barriers at the Reedsville Playground project involves the installation of paved ADA accessible parking spaces and sidewalks to and from the pavilion and restroom. Additionally it includes the removal of the architectural barrier concrete floor, toilet and sink in the existing restroom to make it ADA compliant. Installation of new ADA compliant signage, toilet, sink, grab bars, door, door hardware and picnic tables. Some plumbing changes and upgrades will also be needed.

The engineering services contract was awarded to Nittany Engineering Services and Associates of Centre Hall, PA. A pre-bid meeting was held July 1, 2015 and bids were due July 6, 2015. It is anticipated that the award will be made in August with completion anticipated by the mid October.

The ADA Accessibility Improvements/Removal of Architectural Barriers project at Bender Park involves the installation of paved ADA accessible parking spaces and sidewalks to and from the pavilion and restroom. Additionally it includes the removal of the architectural barrier wall, toilet and sink at the existing restroom, and the installation of new ADA compliant signage, toilet, sink, grab bars, door, door

hardware and picnic tables. Some plumbing changes and upgrades will also be needed. The engineering services contract was awarded to Nittany Engineering & Associates of Centre Hall, PA. A pre-bid meeting was held July 1, 2015 and bids were due July 6, 2015. It is anticipated that the award will be made in August with completion anticipated by the mid October.

Removal of Architectural Barriers-Reedsville sidewalk replacement project

This project has been put on a short delay, due to a PENNDOT Street/Roadway improvement project that affects a portion of this project. Design for this project is being completed by Nittany Engineering & Associates of Centre Hall, PA. Final design should be completed in late fall. Bidding is anticipated over the winter time and construction will take place in the early spring of 2016.

Derry Township CDBG Projects Update

Kish Dog Park

The removal of architectural barrier projects at the proposed Kish Dog Park is nearing completion. This project involves CDBG assistance to make the dog park handicapped accessible, which includes access to the park, parking and ADA facilities for a bathroom that will serve the dog park and all of Kish Park. Other improvements, which are being facilitated by a grant from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development and local and county contributions, include filling in the old pool, site improvements, grass seeding, the planting of trees, and new fencing to separate large and small dogs. It is anticipated the project will be finished by the end of July with an official opening delayed to insure an adequate grass cover. The official opening for the Kish Dog Park will be September 19, 2015.



Water Line Extension

The Municipal Authority of the Borough of Lewistown (MABL) municipal water line extension project is for residential properties along portions of SR 522 North and the Hillside Terrace Mobile Home Park. All materials and contracts requiring labor have been bid. The entire project is under contract. Construction started in early May of 2015. The 1st phase of the work including the main water line installation and connection to the Hillside Terrace Trailer Park is completed. The entire project is anticipated to be completed by late 2015. Following the completion of the main water line, the Township will use CDBG funds to assist income eligible households with their water lateral connections. Approximately 47 households including the mobile home park will benefit with this new extension.



Annual Transportation Update

Karen Michael, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Assistant District Executive for design for District II, provided an annual transportation update at the Mifflin County Planning Commission meeting on Thursday, June 23, 2015.

Ms. Michael stated that PennDOT has been maintaining state bridges and roads in Mifflin County for many years. PennDOT recently replaced bridges in Brown Township on state Route 1005 over Tea Creek, for which work began in Sept. 2013; and a box culvert on state Route 2004 over the tributary leading to Jacks Creek, for which work began in Feb. 2014.

Bridge replacements and rehabilitations in progress include: bridges on U.S. Route 322 in the Lewistown Borough area, for which work began in Jan. 2014; the U.S. Route 22 Beaver Dam Run bridge; U.S. Route 522 Jacks Creek bridge; U.S. Route 522 branch Jacks Creek bridge; State Route 655 Coffee Run bridge; State Route 1002 Dry Creek bridge; State Route 2002 Kish Creek bridge; State Route 2008 Wolf Run bridge; and the State Route 3014 Juniata River Bridge, which were all ready to have construction begin in June 2014.

PennDOT is also scheduled to replace eight bridges and assess a slope issue in the next four years. Bridges to be replaced include State Route 3017 in Wayne Township; State Route 1005 in Milroy; State Route 22 over Messer Run Bridge; State Route 2002 near Standard Steel; State Route 3001 over Kish Creek; State Route 2001 associated with Jacks Creek; and State Route 2004 over Jacks Creek.

In Spring 2018, a betterment project is scheduled for the Burnham interchange on U.S. Route 322. Ms. Michael said PennDOT is aiming to lengthen the exit ramp on the eastbound side of U.S. Route 322, as well as conduct general road maintenance and paving. Additionally, contractors will be analyzing landslide issues due to sloping on U.S. Route 322 west in the area of the Burnham exit.

Ms. Michael also provided a timeline of the construction on U.S. Route 322 in Potters Mills Gap. PennDOT has split the project into three sections. The first section is underway and involves constructing a bridge over U.S. Route 322 at the top of Seven Mountains. Materials bidding for sections two and three is scheduled to begin in spring of 2016 and spring of 2017, respectively.

Finally, Michael mentioned 11 rapid bridge replacement projects in Mifflin and Juniata counties, which are scheduled to begin and be completed in 2017.

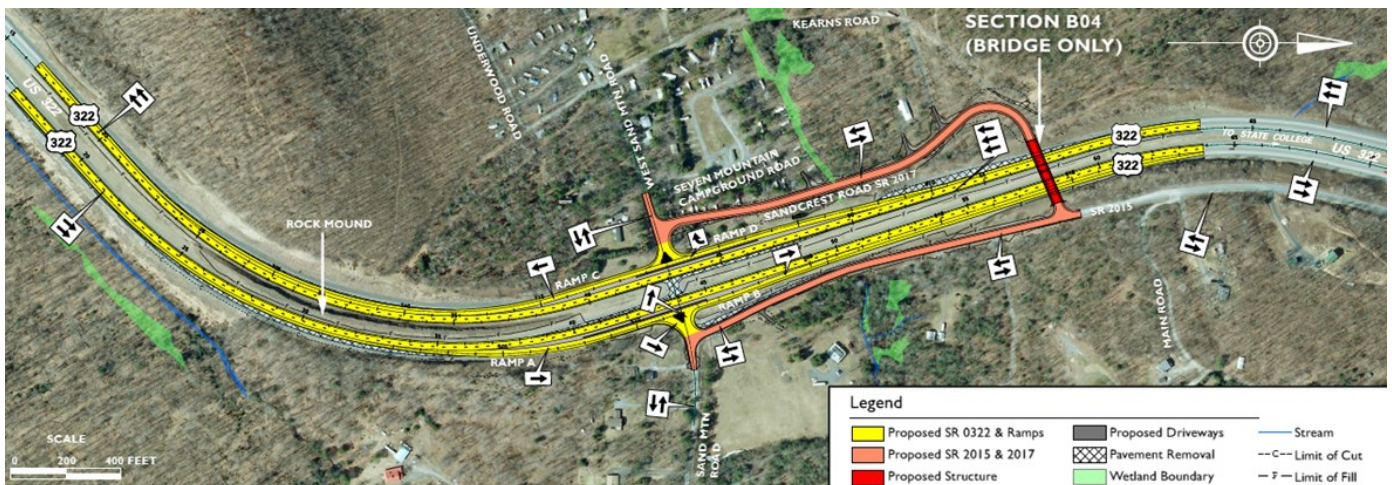
First picture to right: SR 3017 Box Culvert in Wayne Township



Second picture to right: New crossover bridge on Seven Mountains



Below: Potter Mills Gap Project



Act 167 (continued)

has a model stormwater ordinance that municipalities can adopt and for those that have adopted the model it has put them ahead of the game. Otherwise he stated it is only a matter of time for enforcement.

Even with a stormwater plan in place, municipalities must follow through and act on the plan because citizens also have the right to sue to enforce Act 167. If a citizen or environmental group feels that they're negatively impacted (by storm water), they can go after a municipality for not following the act.

Mr. Furlan stated the Act calls for a re-review of the model ordinance every five years. Bill Gomes concurred and hoped some municipalities that had not adopted the model ordinance would reconsider if they could make modifications to the model ordinance. For questions about the model ordinance, please contact the Planning office.

Mifflin County Applies for Funding for Proposed Juniata River Trail

For the past year, the Mifflin County Planning Commission has been exploring ways to implement the Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan that was adopted by the County Commissioners in 2014. A priority identified in the Comprehensive Plan, which is linked to the County 2010 Greenway, Open Space and Rural Recreation Plan, is trail development. One of the trails identified is the Juniata River Walk West with linkage to the Kish River Walk, which follows along the north side of the Juniata River on what is believed to be the former towpath of the Juniata Division of the PA Canal.

In April of 2015, the Mifflin County Commissioners authorized the development of the Juniata River Trail Feasibility Study, which was completed by YSM Landscape Architects in early June 2015. The study showed that a multi-purpose trail for walking, jogging and cycling was feasible along the River from Victory Park to Blue Juniata Drive just beyond Lowe's. However, due to its length of almost 2 miles, the overall cost and the logistics of easements from one or two property owners, the project was divided into two phases. Phase I will develop a trail just under ¾ of a mile from Victory Park west along the north shore of the River to Crystal Springs Ave. This area is currently owned by Lewistown Borough and will have a positive economic impact on the community by encouraging healthful activity, access to the River and draw visitors to the area.

The PA Department of Community and Economic Development have a Greenway and Trail program that can assist with projects such as this with a 15% local match. Lewistown Borough requested that the County be the applicant for the trail since the project would have a community wide impact. Lewistown agreed to provide the majority of the financial match for the project as well as maintain the trail if the project was approved. The overall costs for the Phase I is almost \$285,000. The application was submitted on June 30, 2015 and the State anticipates making a decision on applications by the end of September.



**PLANNING
DEPARTMENT STAFF**

William Gomes, AICP
Director

James Lettiere, AICP
Community Development Administrator /
Assistant Director

Doug Marks
Housing Rehabilitation Specialist /
Construction Manager

Jodie Barger
CDBG Fiscal Manager

Nicole Singer
Office / Grants Manager

Donna Baer
Fiscal Assistant

**MIFFLIN COUNTY PLANNING
AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

20 North Wayne Street
Lewistown, PA 17044

Phone: (717) 242-0887

Fax: (717) 242-5460

Email: mcplanning@co.mifflin.pa.us



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Development Department for
planning services offered.*